

# EMERGING PROBLEMS OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE TREND OF MIGRATION IN UTTARAKHAND

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## **EMERGING PROBLEMS OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE TREND OF MIGRATION IN UTTARAKHAND**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Unprecedentedly increasing trend of population and its larger addition to the labourforce has been a serious problem and concern of discussions among social scientists, policy makers and administrators who are engaged in the development planning of Uttarakhand. The predominantly agricultural based economy is producing very low level of per hectare income and the possibility of developing agriculture sector so as to increase the agricultural productivity and create additional employment opportunities has been recognised difficult task due to certain geographical and locational problems, small size of holdings, inadequately development potentials of irrigation facilities etc. The presently emerging situation is that the pressure of labourforce is consistantly increasing on agriculture due to lacking availability of employment opportunities in non-farm sector economy. So carrying out agricultural operation through overcrowded labourforce engaged on it, is recognised a purely uneconomic task. The grains production undertaken from the own farms of the farmers is hardly sufficient for their basic requirement. So a large number of farming communities has to purchase foodgrains from the market. Even the increasing

flow of various non-food industrial products in rural areas, due to significant increase and improvements in the transport and communication systems during the past, has sufficiently influenced the demands of local people for market goods. Inability of people to acquire the non-food industrial products and to purchase the foodgrains to meet their household demands due to lack of sufficient purchasing power a larger segment of labourforce is compell to migrate outside Uttarakhand for seeksiding the opportunities of employment and the avenues of incomes. As a result, it is well evident fact that the demand of both food and non-food products of people living in rural areas of Uttarakhand is largely met through remittances which are sent by migrant family members of different households. In this sense a study<sup>1</sup> postulates that it is good that a workable population are benefitted through the money order economy.

## EMPLOYMENT

As indicated already that a majority of workforce is engaged in agriculture and alied activities in Uttarakhand. However, the concentration of workers has been increasing in teritary sector of economies, particularly in informal sector activities and a significant decline in the proportion of labourforce has been observed both in primary sector as well as in secondary sector of economies over the years. Shift of workers from agriculture related occupations in primary sector to tertiary sector could be basically due to the fact



that agriculture related occupations provide low level of earnings than the occupations available in tertiary sector. Also the labourforce cannot be provided regular employment opportunity in agriculture related activities because the work in agriculture is available only for shorter duration during its operational periods. The extent of larger differentials prevailing in earnings between the occupations of household based industrial units and the occupations of tertiary sector, such as self-employed and government occupations, could be the main reason behind decreasing participation of workforce in primary sector of economies. It has to be noted that the lacking development of larger industrial enterprises have forced the workforce to join mainly in household based manufacturing activities in the region. And the various occupations and activities associated with household based manufacture sector have very low level of lincome generation capacity.

In the tertiary sector economies around 2.44 lakh labourforce was employed out of which the public sector was providing employment to 2.10 lakh labourforce, remaining 34 thousand labourforce was employed in private sector in Uttarakhand upto the period 1993. The State Government is providing employment opportunities to about 95 thousand labourforce and around 48 thousand labourforce is employed in state undertaking institutions and corporations while only 29 thousand labourforce is employed with Central Government and 14 thousand labourforce with local bodies.

The growth of employment in organised economic activities has been indicated significantly much below the growth of both population and labourforce in Uttarakhand. During the period of last ten years the annual growth rate of employment was 1.17 per cent as against the population growth rate of 2.25 per cent.

The employment is growing at highest rate in Almora (15.22 per cent) followed by Tehri Garhwal (13.22 per cent), Chamoli (13.16 per cent), Dehradun (12.68 per cent, Nainital (11.03 per cent) and at lowest rate in Uttarkashi 6.45 per cent while the negative growth of 0.65 per cent has been for Tehri Garhwal. On the other hand in un-organised private sector the annual growth of employment was found around one per cent point level but it has been consistently declining in Almora, Uttarakashi, Dehradun and Tehri Garwal over the years. But a larger growth of 10.62 per cent is observed in the case of district Nainital followed by 5.02 per cent in Pithoragarh and below one per cent both in Pauri and Chamoli. In all the employment in both organised and un-organised sector of tertiary sector economies of Uttarakhand has increased from 2.17 lakhs in 1984 to 2.44 lakhs in 1993.

It is further pointed out that the development of both organised and un-organised sector of tertiary economies has been largely in two industrially developed districts Nainital and Dehradun. This could be basically due to the fact that various informal sector economies and commercial

TABLE 1 : EMPLOYMENT IN ORGANISED AND UN-ORGANISED SECTOR

DISTRICT	Employment '000'					
	Organised Sector		Un-organised Sector		All Sectors	
	1984	1993	1984	1993	1984	1993
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Almora	22.96 (12.22)	26.53 (12.64)	2.01 ( 6.82)	1.83 ( 5.64)	24.97 (11.49)	28.36 (11.61)
Nainital	44.23 (23.54)	49.93 (23.80)	8.67 (29.40)	17.89 (55.15)	53.90 (24.34)	67.82 (27.76)
Pithoragarh	14.51 ( 7.72)	16.05 ( 7.65)	0.64 ( 2.17)	1.00 ( 3.08)	15.25 ( 7.02)	17.05 ( 6.98)
Uttarkashi	9.29 ( 4.94)	9.95 ( 4.74)	2.13 ( 7.22)	0.32 ( 0.98)	11.42 ( 5.25)	10.27 ( 4.20)
Chamoli	11.37 ( 6.04)	12.89 ( 6.14)	0.14 ( 0.47)	0.15 ( 0.46)	11.51 ( 5.29)	13.04 ( 5.34)
Tehri Garhwal	12.91 ( 6.87)	12.52 ( 5.97)	1.76 ( 5.97)	0.48 ( 1.48)	14.67 ( 6.75)	13.00 ( 5.32)
Dehradun	55.24 (29.40)	62.63 (29.85)	12.13 (41.13)	10.73 (33.08)	67.37 (30.99)	72.96 (29.87)
Pauri Garhwal	17.38 ( 9.25)	19.73 ( 9.40)	2.01 ( 6.82)	2.04 ( 6.29)	19.39 ( 8.92)	21.77 ( 8.91)
Uttarakhand	187.89 (100.0)	209.83 (100.0)	29.49 (100.0)	32.44 (100.0)	217.38 (100.0)	244.27 (100.0)

Source : Training and Employment Exchange Directorate,  
Lucknow, U.P.

establishment have been fastly developing with the development of various industrial activities in these districts. As indicated already that over 91 per cent of the large industrial units of Uttarakhand are alone located in

the plain areas of district Nainital and Dehradun. The share of employment in organised sector for both the districts together has increased from 53 per cent in 1984 to 70 per cent in 1993. Also the share of employment in informal sector activities which was 71 per cent in 1984 has increased at 88 per cent during 1993. However in purely mountaneous and hilly districts the share of employment of organised sector has in fact, declined in Pithoragarh, Uttarakashi and Tehri Garhwal while it has marginally increased in the remaining three districts. Again the share of employment in informal sector activities has largely declined in most of the districts of purely hilly areas excepting the case of Pithoragarh.

#### WORKFORCE PARTICIPTION AND THE EXTENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT

In Uttarakhand, over one third of its population is employed in various economic activities, though the agriculture and related activities are playing an important role in providing employment to its labourforce. But the participation of both men as well as women workforce is consistantly declining over the years. In all, the workforce participation of male population has also declined from 47.69 per cent in 1981 to 46.60 per cent in 1991, while it has increased from 24.21 per cent in 1981 to 25.62 per cent in 1991 for women workforce. Increasing trend of migration of male labourforce could be attributed a possible explanation



TABLE 2 : DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND WORKFORCE

(in '000)

Description	1981			1991		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<u>A. Population</u>						
Rural	1966.3 (79.67)	1984.6 (83.82)	3859.9 (81.70)	2318.2 (76.46)	2322.0 (80.23)	4640.2 (78.30)
Urban	501.7 (20.33)	383.1 (16.18)	884.8 (18.30)	713.7 (23.54)	572.3 (19.77)	1286.0 (21.70)
Total	2468.0 (100.0)	2367.7 (100.0)	4835.7 (100.0)	3031.9 (100.0)	2894.3 (100.0)	5926.2 (100.0)
<u>B. Workers</u>						
Total	1177.1 (100.0)	573.1 (100.0)	1750.2 (100.0)	1413.1 (100.0)	741.6 (100.0)	2154.7 (100.0)
Agriculture	668.8 (56.82)	544.3 (94.98)	1213.1 (69.31)	702.9 (49.74)	687.5 (92.70)	1390.4 (64.53)
Other Sectors	508.2 (43.18)	28.8 (5.02)	537.0 (30.29)	710.2 (50.26)	54.1 (7.30)	764.3 (35.47)
<u>C. Worker- Partici- pation Rate</u>						
	47.69	24.21	36.19	46.60	25.62	36.36

Source : Census of India, U.P. Population Census, 1981 and 1991.

behind the decline of their participation in different economic activities in Uttarakhand. The workforce participation rate in Uttarakhand is significantly much higher than the national level, particularly due to significant contribution of women population in different



economic activities and resulting relatively larger participation ratio than the national average.<sup>2</sup>

A higher rate of population growth and unusually high participation rate, however, has not resulted in a high extent of overt/open unemployment. It cannot be considered a serious problem in the region in so far as to the estimates based on various sources, the magnitude is found hardly 1 per cent of labourforce. A very low magnitude of overt unemployment is possibly because of out-migration of a sizeable proportion of male workers. But, urban unemployment could be considered to be of a substantial magnitude as the various estimates put it around 4 to 5 per cent of the urban labourforce. At the same time, it is also found out that unemployment among the educated is considerable and is mostly concentrated in urban areas.<sup>3</sup>

#### MIGRATION

It has universally been well recognised the fact that the non-availability of gainful employment opportunities to the labourforce in Uttarakhand significantly a larger segment of them migrate outside region for seeking employment opportunities and the avenues of income so as to maintain its household's living at the place of native. The able bodied young and educated family member move elsewhere leaving his remaining family members at home. The migrants regularly send a larger amount of earning at the native place

from the place of destinations to their dependent family members. Now the situation is that over 55 per cent of the households in the region are only dependent on the money received from the migrant family members because the income earned from agricultural and other sources is much below the level of their requirements.

As a result of the increasing rate of out-migration of labourforce from Uttarakhand the region has lost a larger proportion of well educated and active human resources in the past. A study<sup>4</sup> based on the secondary data and the primary data collected in a very diversified manner revealed that the rate of out-migration accounts for 10.2 per cent of the total population. Out of these outmigrants, 2.2 per cent migrated within the hills, 1.5 per cent migrated to terai and Bhabar and 6.5 per cent migrated outside Uttarakhand. These out-migrants go for various categories of jobs is, 32.5 per cent for Government/semi Government jobs, 23.6 per cent for defence, 17.4 per cent for private, 11.2 per cent for education and 8.4 per cent for others. The highest proportion of out-migrants was recorded from Pauri 15.1 per cent followed by Tehri Garhwal (13.1 per cent) and Almora (10.9 per cent) while the lowest rate of outmigration was estimated from Uttar Kashi (4 per cent) followed by Dehradun (2.1 per cent) and no labourforce migrated from Chamoli. Another study carried out in Kumaun region postulates that the district Almora and Pithoragarh alone has lost around 10 per cent of their population due to migration.<sup>5</sup>

The trend of inter-district migration is consistently declining in the region with marginal increase of in-migration in Alomora and Pithoragarh districts and fastly increase in Nainital during 1951-61 and 1961-71. It also indicated that out-migration from the region upto 1921 mainly remained confined with the state of U.P. In migration in the region from outside state has been higher than the out-migration from the region. However, with the considerable increase and improvements in the means of transport and communication, literacy among labourforce, knowledge about the opportunity areas for employment, aspiration of better quality life have influenced the out-migration of people largely particularly after 1921. A study<sup>6</sup> indicates that, 54 per cent of total out-migrants have crossed the boundaries of the state (of whom 44 per cent have gone to Bombay and Delhi alone) and 23 per cent have joined the armed forces. According to another estimates<sup>7</sup>, around 50 per cent of out-migrants from Kumaun and Garhwal region go to these forces. The study by Bhauryal (1986) finds that the proportion of total persons joining armed forces is high (28 per cent) from the region but it is still higher at 42 per cent from remote villages.

A study<sup>8</sup> finds that migration was temporary or semi permanent in nature in earlier periods but in the recent years it has a tendency of becoming permanent. Earlier the migrants were mostly single and more likely to return to their native place but an increasing tendency of wives and



children accompanying the working migrants in recent years makes their return more unlikely. Since around 10 per cent of the labourforce have migrated outside region with their wives and over 74 per cent of the wives are living with their husbands for over 15 years.

### REASONS OF MIGRATION

The migration of labourforce from one location to another is influenced by variety of factors. However the economic condition of households of the migrants at the native place is the most important factor which push its working age group labourforce to migrate in search of employment and income opportunities. Besides this, inequality and variations in resources and income distribution are important influencing variables which lead to the migration of people from less resources or less opportunity areas to greater opportunity and resource areas in search of employment, income generation and betterment of life. In otherwords, population tends to migrate from low opportunity areas such as rural or underdeveloped areas to higher opportunity areas such as larger and well developed cities or towns to get the opportunity of socio-economic and cultural development. Thus the intensity of migration from rural areas is intimately associated with the degree of unevenness in the distribution of resources.

Lack of amenities of life and economic opportunities in rural areas also influence the flow of migration from rural to urban areas where these facilities are commonly well available. Consequently the lower level of wages available in agriculture based economy of rural areas leads the population to shift to higher wage non-form economies in urban and developed areas. Expected wage availability in urban areas is thus an equally important determinant of migration by which the population living in rural areas is influenced to migrate to urban areas.<sup>9</sup> Confirmation in this context of wage differentials is highlighted in a study by Hay<sup>10</sup> of migration relating to Tunisia. He finds, urban earnings functions are proxy variables defining the urban expected income levels. A study by carvajal<sup>11</sup> also revealed that differences in average income or wage levels between two places invariably turn up among the most important explanatory factors. Thus the migration is positively associated with the urban income and negatively related to the rural income.

Migration also generally occur due to a complex interaction of push and pull factors and it takes place when the positive pull factors at the place of destination is out-numbered by negative push factors at the palce of origin.<sup>12</sup> The migration motivated with pull factors refers to the kind of attraction and personel willingness of people that attracts people into the cities and urban areas whereas the push factor refer to conditional migration where people



migrate due to some economic compulsions, national calamities, political and cultural pressures etc. The out-migration from rural areas of Uttarakhand is more commonly motivated by both push as well as pull factors. However, the magnitude of rural-urban migration is identically related to the push factors as a result of limited opportunities of employment in rural agricultural economies and higher employment opportunities in urbanised economies.<sup>13</sup>

The geographical and topographical situation of the location of villages and its distance from nearest transport facility and urban settlement is also found to be significantly associated with the out-migration, particularly in case the of migration from hilly and mountaneous areas of Uttarakhand. A study by Bhauryal<sup>14</sup> revealed the fact that rate of out-migration to be highest from the villages near the road and town (21 per cent) followed by from those moderately remote from road and town (15 per cent) and lowest from the remote from road and town (12 per cent). Nearness to road and town implies more awareness, better contacts and easy access to towns facilitating higher degree of out-migration.

A detailed study<sup>15</sup> undertaken to examine the causes and factors associated to the migration and the basic characteristics of migrants revealed that although the main reason of migration is economic in nature, yet what is important to note is that relatively larger land holders seem more prone

to migrate than the marginal holders or the landless. Similarly another study by Bhauryal (1987) finds that since most migration is for economic reasons, mostly such members of the households migrate who are more likely to be able to get employment at destination. A study by Mehta (1986)<sup>16</sup> postulates that a highest proportion of migrants are among the lowest income groups and the intensity of migration starts declining among succeeding higher income groups of population, despite the fact that migration is motivated from all categories of income groups. The economic compulsion of the labourforce is seen forcing them to migrate outside their villages.

Similarly another study<sup>17</sup> also postulates the views that basic reason of migration is mostly economic in nature. The propensity to migrate (seasonal) is higher among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes due to poverty and absence of productive assets. It is found that with the larger size of land holdings, tendency of seasonal migration tends to decrease. Higher the income and agricultural holdings, lesser is the extent of seasonal migration. The marginal agricultural farmers or landless labourers have more chances of seasonal migration as compared to relatively larger holding groups of family members.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS

Besides the various socio-economic and locational factors that influence the propensity of migration of

labourforce, certain basic personal characteristics of individuals also equally influence the motivation and mobility of labourforce into different geographical locations. The educational characteristics and age components are among the most important elements which determine the mobility of an individual. Individuals with relatively higher level of education and with young age group tend to migrate more frequently into different places and different wage paid occupations, even when the mobility is over a larger distance, as compared to the individuals with relatively lower level of educational attainment and fall in relatively higher age groups.<sup>18</sup> A study also revealed<sup>19</sup> that the out-migration of population appears to be very selective and it is well testified by the fact that an overwhelming majority 60.98 per cent migrants moved out at young age i.e., the age group of 20 and 25 years while the migration of population with less than 15 years age group accounts for about 14 per cent and only 2.44 per cent for above 34 years age group. However, the tendency of migration among individuals with different levels of educational attainment have been almost similar. But significantly a higher number of migrants had secondary level of education followed by illiterates and higher education. Consequently the migrant population is confining to males largely. A study by Bhauryal<sup>20</sup> revealed that male migrants belonging to the prime working age group predominate among out-migrants. The average age at migration is found to be 20 years and 91 per

cent of the migrants belonged to age group 15 to 35 years. Regarding the educational characteristics of migrants the study finds that a very high level of educational selectivity among the migrants. Of the total population, illiterates were 42 per cent and literates were 58 per cent, but among migrants, 89 per cent were literates. Though both illiterates and migrate but the propensity to migrate increases with the level of education.

Regarding the trend of migration of population from different size class of families the general observations are that the migrants tend to out-migrate largely from large family size in which both the needs and earning capacity are relatively higher than the local earning opportunity. An assessment of the analysis on family size and the trend of migration reveals<sup>21</sup> that there is direct relationship between the size of family and migration since around 28 per cent migrants had moved from a family size of above 7 members while only 10.24 per cent migrants had a family size of less than 3 members. The study by Bhauryal (1986) also finds that proportion of out-migrants from the families of upto 6 members is quite low but it is progressively higher from the families having 7 and more members and is highest from the families having more than 10 members. The propensity of migration is also found considerably higher among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes due to poverty and absence of productive assets.<sup>22</sup> The proportion of migrants schelduled castes and scheduled tribes accounted for about 82



per cent followed by brahmins (67 per cent) and thakurs (50 per cent). The scheduled castes have the lowest propensity of migration from the villages having comparatively better agricultural conditions.<sup>23</sup>

### IMPACT OF MIGRATION

As indicated in the proceeding analysis that the size of population is general and qualitatively better resourceful human resources have been consistently decreasing in the region over the years largely due to unprecedently increasing volume migration of population and active labourforce from Uttarakhand. However, the labourforce with better educational attainment and are possessing sufficient productive ability to generate relatively higher amount of income than what they are able to generate in the region are compelled to migrate outside Uttarakhand such that they can fully use their productive capability and efficiency so-as-to, generate income according to their ability and productive skill. As has been well depicted the fact that the migration of labourforce from outside Uttarakhand had been economically quite successful since migrants are receiving significantly higher amount of incomes at the place of destinations as compared to what they were generating at the native place.

A study by Pande (1984) pointed out that on an average a migrant was able to find employment for only 168 days during whole year period at the place of his origin and lack of



alternative avenues for employment migration proved as relief to a great extent. There is a great role of remittances in the economy of Kumaun as about 7 to 10 per cent of total income is added by remittances (excluding the money brought by migrants) and at least 39.50 per cent households get the money by remittances. The share of remitted money is about 40.52 per cent in total household income of those family who get remittances. To some extent the migration results international, inter-regional and inter-caste transfer of money which have also changed the pattern of income distribution at the native place.

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A study by Bhauryal (1988) reveals that absence of males has resulted in overwork for female, children and aged. Of the total children, about one-fourth were found working in migrant households as against 17 per cent in non-migrant households. Also, the decrease in cropped area, family insecurity and dislocation of household activities are observed in the migrant households. In spite of the use of hired labour and consequent higher cost of cultivation by the migrant households, output per acre land could not be maintained at the level of non-migrant households. Net value of output per acre is estimated to Rs.860 in the case of migrant households as against Rs.1004 for non-migrant households. About 70 per cent migrant households were using hired labour as against 39 per cent of non-migrant households in addition to extended work for female and children.

In-so-far-as the effect of migration on migrant household's income is concerned, it turns out to be highly positive. On an average, remittances contribute around one-third of the total disposable income of a household. At the same time, population loss due to loss of labourforce is not found significant because despite migration, the households still have workers enough to get the maximum yield from the land they possess. Thus migration results in net benefit of a significant magnitude to the households sending out-migrants. This is so even when only regular cash remittances are taken into account not accounting for accumulated savings of return migrants. It is also important to note that most migrants serve in the armed forces and return with accumulated savings which are found to contribute significantly to capital formation.<sup>24</sup>

As much this nature of migration motivated with economic need leads to better economic benefit both at the native place of migrants as well as the place of destination. It is through significant amount of income contribution to the natives and supply of required categories of manpower for economic development at various destinations. Migration remains the only alternative for labourforce in the lesser opportunity areas which forces people to move to higher opportunity areas for the betterment of socio-economic improvements of their households. A relatively higher extent of benefits from migration can be observed in the case of those individuals who were able to contribute only small

amount of income for their household prior to migration as compared to those who could assist their families by a greater amount in monetary terms. The migrants from the higher income groups tend to send lesser amount of remittances because their own expenditure level remains higher. On the other hand population with lower income group tend always concerned with the poor-economic conditions of their households which compels them to spend lower amount of incomes on themselves at the place of destinations and contribute as much as possible towards their families living at the native place.

Thus, considering this phenomenon in view, it could be derived that the migration of lower income group population leads to a better income contribution to their households and also help in reducing the income inequality among the different income groups in the villages. Examining the increase in the household income with the initiation of migration it is seen that the income level of migrant households at the native place has raised nearly two-folds more as compared pre-migration of period of its family member. Looking at the households according to income groups, it is noticed that almost all the households whether they fall in lower or higher income groups, have increased their average household income significantly after migration. However, the increase in the income of lower income group households has increased to a much higher degree as compared to households with higher income groups. But in absolute

terms the income of upper income group of households is still higher as compared to lower income group households despite the fact that they are receiving lower amount of contribution from the migrants from within this income group. This is due to the fact that households falling into higher income group have very high amount of income even before the migration of their family members, though very small numbers of migrants were earner before migration.<sup>25</sup>

Average size of remittances which are received from migrant family members are found to increase with raising income level though the proportion of remittances declines with higher income groups. Most of the migrant at the lower income levels belong to very poor families and thus the needs for cash to their relatives even for food and other necessary consumption items is generally greater. Such migrants try to remit the greater part of their earnings even at the cost of their own standard of living and quality of life. As regard those having families/dependents with them, and single migrants, the latter are more likely to remit significantly more than the former. Around 89 per cent of the latter groups of migrants were remitting while the proportion of remitters among former group of migrants was about 62 per cent.

Overall it was well depicted the fact that the existing gap in the income level or the income distribution among various households in different villages has been reduced to



some extent after the initiation of migration, since the lower income group households are receiving a higher proportion of remittances thereby increasing the income levels of the lower income household at larger extent. Thus looking at this kind of structural changes in in pattern of income distribution as a result of migration of labourforce from low income group households it may be concluded that migration motivated with economic reasons and made from less opportunity areas, where employment opportunities are not available as per the productive capacity, ability and cognitive skill of human resources, to higher opportunity areas, where such productive human resources can utilise their potentials, could be an important instrumental measure for raising the income levels of lower income groups of households and mitigating the imbalances existing in the pattern of income distribution in less opportunity areas.



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